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Defence of the Government

OF THE

A. C. Bryan

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METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

BY THE REV. JAMES L. CHAPMAN,

IN HIS DEBATE WITH THE REV. J. R. GRAVES, AT CANTON, MISS,
MAY, 1855.

Nashville, Tenn. :

PUBLISHED BY E. STEVENSON & J. E. EVANS, AGENTS,

FOR THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH.

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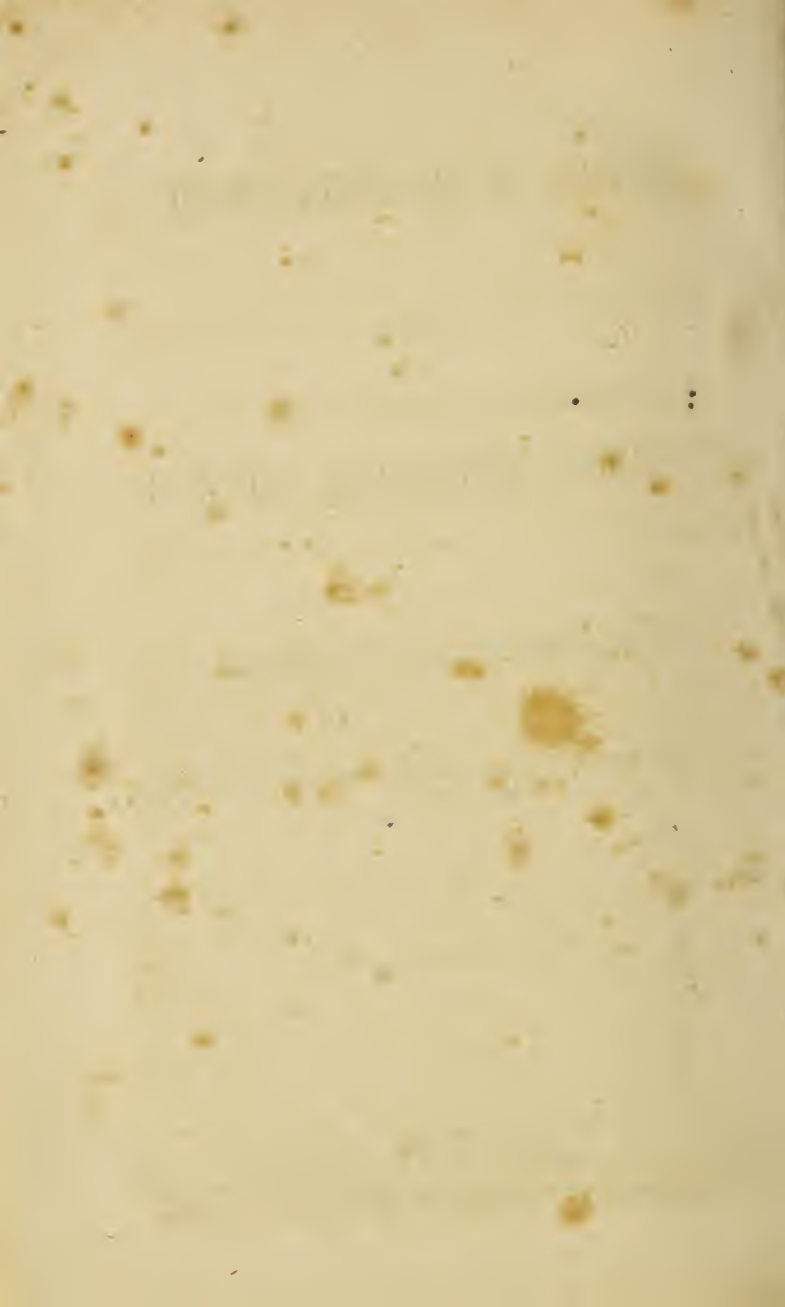
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MODERATORS, LADIES, AND GENTLEMEN :—We are now before you to prove, whatever may be the opinions and doubts of some, that the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church, whether we refer to the writings of *the fathers*, or the judgment of moderns, is not only scriptural, but republican. In advance of this, we beg leave to state, wishing to bring the points at issue fairly and plainly before all, that every form of government, sanctioned by inspiration, must be duly respected by the followers of the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles. From this there is no appeal. The voice of Scripture demands obedience; and the teachings of the ages of faith, as handed down to us, are not less imperative. We are not at liberty to make war on the despotism of the Persian, the democracy of the Greek, or the republicanism of the Roman, favoring and advocating the theocracy of the Jew. In proof of this, we shall here give the exhortation of Peter, First Epistle, chapter 2, beginning with the thirteenth, and ending with the seventeenth verse: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king, as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish

men : as free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness ; but as the servants of God. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king."

We can safely allow this to pass without comment. Its true and full sense stands out boldly on its Heaven-sanctioned outlines.

In a word, inspiration tolerates republicanism, and ventures not to dethrone the king.

We are now ready, having made the preliminary remarks deemed necessary, to take up the first point in the question, and to place it above the possibility of contradiction : namely, that the Methodist Episcopal Church is scripturally organized. Without circumlocution or equivocation, we confidently assert that Wesley, the father of Methodism, the most efficient form of Christianity since the days of the apostles, was a scriptural bishop.

The word bishop, properly speaking, simply signifies an overseer : that is, one who has the inspection and oversight of any thing. With this the testimony of Nehemiah agrees, ch. xi. 22 : "The overseer of the Levites at Jerusalem." The most common acceptation of the word, however, we have in Acts xx., and in Paul's Epistles. Peter, in his first Epistle, ii. 25, calls Christ the Bishop of souls. Isaiah speaks thus, ch. lx. 17 : "I will also make thy officers peace, and thine overseers (bishops) righteousness." Such is the use and meaning of the word.

We shall now direct your attention to the persons to whom it was applied in the days of the apostles. We read in Acts xx. : "And from Miletus he (Paul) sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church." What more ? This, that he said to these elders : "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, (bishops,) to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

In the language of Dr. Campbell, we would say : "Here there can be no question that the same persons are denominated presbyters and bishops." This distinction, however, may be made—they were presbyters by virtue of ordination, bishops on account of having charge in the Church of Christ. Wesley was a presbyter by virtue of his ordination, and scriptural bishop on account of the charge over which he presided.

Here, with great propriety, we may ask, Have we not, in the above quotation, a clear precedent for calling Wesley a bishop, a scriptural bishop?

Dr. Clarke justly observes: "Bishops and presbyters were, at this time, of the same order." See his note on Acts xx. 28.

In a word, the man who had charge of a church, or churches, was called a bishop. Elders or presbyters, indeed, might have been in the same church, or churches, officiating by the bishops' permission or request, to whom the word could not have been properly applied, they not being directly in charge. The relation of a local elder in our church to one of our bishops, may be looked on as a practical illustration of the view advanced on this feature of the subject.

Paul, in his first Epistle to Timothy, ch. 3, speaks thus: "This is a true saying, if any man desire the office of a bishop, (not the order of a bishop,) he desireth a good work. A bishop, then, must be blameless: the husband of one wife: vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach: not given to wine." The apostle, after giving directions respecting the bishop, proceeds to give directions respecting deacons; but does not give the slightest intimation of the existence of a middle order, now known by the name of priest or elder—a fact which clearly demonstrates that no such order then existed. All will please remember that the apostle speaks of the office of a bishop, not of the order of a bishop. He wrote, knowing that the office of a bishop included the order of the elder.

Was not Wesley a bishop in this sense? Most assuredly.

Paul, addressing the Philippians, says: "To all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." (Ch. 1.) Here we have again bishops and deacons, but not one word respecting the "middle order," priest or presbyter. Wesley, in view of this, declared: "I firmly believe that I am a scriptural bishop—as much so as any man in England, or in Europe; for the uninterrupted succession I know to be a fable, which no man ever did or can prove." See *Watson's Wesley*, p. 247.

The following passage, from the fifth chapter of Peter's first Epistle, will show that our position respecting bishop and elder cannot reasonably be disputed: "The elders which are among you I exhort: feed the flock of God which is among

you, taking the oversight thereof." "That is," says Richard Watson, "discharging the office of bishops."

We shall now invite special attention to the charge of Paul to Titus, concerning Crete: "For this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee." Titus i. 5.

Homer, speaking of Crete, says:

"Crete awes the circling waves, a fruitful soil,
And ninety cities crown the sea-born isle."

Though he only attributes to the island in this quotation ninety cities, yet in another place he speaks of one hundred cities. Whether we contemplate ninety or one hundred cities, Titus was instructed to ordain elders in every city. Here we have a missionary bishop, his power extending over one hundred cities. These elders, when appointed to their respective charges and places, were called bishops: hence we read in the seventh verse: "For a bishop must be blameless."

Did not Paul instruct Titus to ordain elders in one hundred cities? Did not Wesley see in this a precedent for setting Coke apart, to set in order the things that were wanting in the American societies? Did not Coke act in America, as Titus acted in the island of Crete? Wesley cannot be censured for what he did in this instance, except at the expense of censuring Paul too. Nor can Coke be censured, without censuring Titus also.

Thus we prove that Wesley was a scriptural bishop, and that he only followed an example set by Paul, when he acted as he did in reference to the American societies.

He who would demand additional proof, might, with equal propriety, demand confirming evidence, the sun shining, of the existence of day.

We shall now direct attention to the various officers found in our fellowship, in order to show that they are fully covered by the rich provisions of inspiration. In our organization we have bishops, presiding elders, travelling preachers, stationed preachers, local preachers, deacons, local deacons, exhorters, and class-leaders.

Paul, in his first epistle to the Church at Corinth, chapter xii. 28, says: "And God hath set some in the Church—first,

apostles ; secondarily, prophets ; thirdly, teachers : after that, miracles ; then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."

Here we observe with more than ordinary emphasis, wishing to be distinctly understood, that our advocacy in this connection will be that of principles, not of names. To the former we profess unyielding devotion, to the latter marked indifference. For instance, might we not call the President of the United States the Prince of the People, without the slightest infringement on the principle involved in his office? Certainly.

That this view of the case may appear remarkably obvious to all, we shall resort to contrast. Did not the *apostles* travel in certain districts, ordaining men for the work of the ministry? Do not our bishops travel in certain districts, ordaining men set apart for the work of the Lord? Did not the *prophets*, named above, teach? Dr. Clarke responds: "The word (prophets) is often applied to those who preached the gospel." Do not our ministers teach the people by preaching? Did not the *teachers*, mentioned in the quotation, instruct the people in the elements of the Christian religion? Do not our local preachers perform a similar duty? Did not the *helps*, above designated, discharge ordinary duties for the apostles? Do not our exhorters and class-leaders perform ordinary duties? Thus we see that the officers of the Methodist Episcopal Church are in accordance with the principles of the Scriptures. The example before us is a self-obvious proof of this.

The next item in order is, can the decisions of our bishops, and the elements of our conferences, be defended by any example in the Scriptures? We answer yes—boldly say yes. James, who was president of the council, the notable council, at Jerusalem, pronounced the following decision: "Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God." Acts xv. 19. Dr. Clarke, whose critical knowledge commands the respect of the learned world, thus expresses himself on this matter: "James determined what ought to be done." Again he says: "This was the first council ever held in the Christian Church; and we find it was composed of the apostles and elders simply." If our Annual and General Conferences are composed of

bishops and ministers, do we not find an imposing example for the whole, including the decisions of the bishops, in the council of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem.

Thus we prove that the officers of the Methodist Episcopal Church are in accordance with the liberty and provisions of inspiration—that the Church is scripturally organized in this particular.

We shall now direct attention to the writings of the early fathers, in order to show that our position respecting a bishop is founded on transmitted truth—truth transmitted from the apostles. From their writings, we shall be able to establish the principle involved; and here we remark, that this is all we aim at, being aware that there are things contained in them which cannot be defended.

Clement of Rome, A. D. 87, says: “And thus preaching through countries and cities, they (apostles) appointed the first fruits of their conversions to be bishops and ministers over such as should afterwards believe, having first proved them by the Spirit. Nor was this any new thing, seeing that long before it was written concerning bishops and deacons. For thus saith the Scriptures in a certain place, I will appoint their overseers in righteousness, and their ministers in faith.” Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter xviii.

In chapter xxiv. he says: “It is a shame, my beloved, yea, a very great shame, and unworthy of your Christian profession, to hear that the most firm and ancient Church of the Corinthians should, by one or two persons, be led into a sedition against its priests.” Again, in the xxi. chapter, he says: “Only let the flock of Christ be in peace with the elders that are set over it.” He continues this subject thus: “Our apostles knew by our Lord Jesus Christ that there should be contentions on account of Episcopacy. And, therefore, having a perfect knowledge of this, they appointed persons, as we have before said, and then gave directions, how when they should die, other chosen men should succeed in their ministry.” Lord Barrington expresses himself thus respecting the writings of Clement: “Bishops with Clement are always the same with elders or presbyters, as any one must see if they read the epistle.” Vol. 2, p. 154, ed. 1770.

Ignatius, A. D. 107, says: “And blessed be God, who has granted unto you, who are so worthy of him, to enjoy such an

excellent bishop. For what concerns my fellow-servant Burhus, and your most most blessed deacon in things pertaining to God: I entreat you that he may tarry longer, both for yours and your bishop's honor." See Epistle to the Ephesians, first chapter.

Again he says: "And that being subject to your bishop and presbytery, you may be wholly and thoroughly sanctified." He shows in the following language that all these were of the same Church: "Wherefore it will become you to run together according to the will of your bishop, as also ye do. For your famous Presbytery (that is, of the Ephesian Church) worthy of God, is fitted as exactly to the bishop, as the strings are to the harp. Therefore in your concord and agreeing charity, Jesus Christ is sung, and every single person among you makes up the chorus."

In his epistle to the Magnesians, first chapter, he says: "Seeing then I have been judged worthy to see you, by Damas, your most excellent bishop; and by your very worthy presbyters, Bassus and Apollonius; and by my fellow-servant Sotio, the deacon, in whom I rejoice, forasmuch as he is subject unto his bishop as to the grace of God, and to the Presbytery as to that of Jesus Christ: I determined to write unto you."

His language in the second chapter is: "Your bishop presiding in the place of God, your presbyters in the place of the council of the apostles; and your deacons most dear to me. As therefore the Lord did nothing without the Father, being united to him; so neither do ye do any thing without your bishop and presbyters."

In his epistle to the Trallians, first chapter, he speaks thus: "It is therefore necessary, that as ye do, so without your bishop, you should do nothing: also be ye subject to your presbyters, as to the apostles of Jesus Christ our hope; in whom, if we walk, we shall be found in him. The deacons also, as being the ministers of the mysteries of Jesus Christ, must by all means please all. In like manner let all reverence the deacons as Jesus Christ, and the bishop as the Father, and the presbyters as the Sandedrim of God, and college of apostles."

From these quotations we clearly prove that bishops, presbyters, and deacons were known to the organization of the

Church at a very early period of her Christian history. The cause of truth, however, demands that we should here state, that the genuineness of the epistles of Ignatius is doubted by many.

Let us now direct your attention to testimony which will not be questioned—testimony which will clearly show what bishops, presbyters, and deacons were in the first ages of the Christian Church.

Clement of Alexandria, A. D. 175, says: "I take the progression of bishops, presbyters, and deacons to be imitations of the angelic glory." Strom. 6 p. 667.

Clement, in the seventh book of the same work, gives us his meaning respecting officers in the Church: "One part of it (public worship) is performed by superior ministers, another part by inferior ministers. The superior part is performed by presbyters, the inferior, or servile part, by deacons." These presbyters were bishops: presbyters by ordination, bishops by office.

Irenæus, A. D. 178, says: "We can enumerate those who were appointed by the apostles, bishops in the churches, and their successors, even unto us." Adv. Hær. 4, 63.

He again says: "The apostles wished those to be very perfect and irreprehensible in all things, whom they left their successors, delivering to them their own place of government."

And again he says: "But when we appeal to that tradition which has been preserved us by the successions of presbyters in the churches, they presume they are wiser not only than the presbyters, but even than the apostles, and that they have found the truth in a purer form." Lib. 3, ch. 2.

Here, if we deemed it necessary, we could show that the action of Wesley is fully covered by the testimony of Irenæus, which is in agreement with that of inspiration.

Tertullian, A. D. 100, speaks thus: "The highest priest, who is the bishop, has the right of administering baptism. Then the presbyters and deacons, yet not without the authority of the bishop, because of the honor of the Church. This being preserved, peace is preserved. Otherwise the right belongs even to laymen. However, the laity ought especially to submit humbly and modestly to the discipline of the Church in these matters, and not assume the office of bishop,

seeing their superiors and deacons submit to the same." *De Baptismo*, ch. 17.

We shall now hear what he says respecting the principal officers—bishops: "Approved elders or presbyters preside among us, having received the honor, not by money, but by the suffrages of their brethren." Ch. 39.

Are not our bishops elected in a similar way?

The true position of a bishop is thus explained by Cyprian, who wrote 250, A. D.: "Our Lord gives to all the apostles an equal power, and says: 'As my Father sent me, even so send I you: receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit, they shall be remitted to him, and whosoever sins ye retain, they shall be retained.' Certainly the other apostles also were what Peter was—endowed with an equal fellowship of honor and power. No one ought to make himself bishop of bishops, or pretend to awe his brethren, for every bishop is at liberty to do as he pleases." *Primitive Church by Chapin*, p. 258.

Cyprian, in another place, calls the bishop a president. His language is: "Those who have been baptized in the Church are brought to the president of the Church, that by our prayer and imposition of hands, they may receive the Holy Ghost." Ep. 73.

Were not our bishops originally called superintendents?

Justin Martyr, who wrote 140, A. D., uses similar language. His words are: "To him who presides over the brethren bread is brought, and a cup of wine mixed with water. He who presides having given thanks, they who are called amongst us deacons give to each of those present a portion of the bread and of wine mixed with water, over which the thanksgiving has been made, and carry away a portion to those who are absent." *Apol. 1*, ed. Bened. Paris, 1742.

In another place he calls the bishop a president, saying: "The president delivers a discourse." And again: "The president offers up prayers and thanksgiving." This proves that in their days the highest officer was called a president of the assembly, that is, an elder by ordination, and a bishop by office.

Firmilian, 250, A. D., says: "All power and grace is in the Church in which presbyters preside, and have the power of baptizing, confirming, and ordaining." Have we not

proved that Wesley was a presbyter and a scriptural bishop? And here, we ask, what does the far-famed Firmilian, Bishop of Cesarea, say respecting a presiding presbyter? He has "the power of baptizing, confirming, and ordaining." Eusebius thus speaks of him: "He was very famous." Eccles. ch. 26 Howel presents him in this light: "He made a much more considerable figure in the Church at that time than the Bishop of Rome." See Howel's Pontificate, p. 24.

In a commentary on St. Paul's Epistles, published in the works of Ambrose, who flourished A. D. 370, we have the following information respecting church officers: "The presbyters and bishop had one and the same ordination. The bishop is the chief among the presbyters." Com. on 1 Tim. 3. "As one departed, the next succeeded to the office"—was "constituted such by the judgment of a number of the presbyters." Com. on Ephe. cap. 4.

In like manner we elect our bishops.

The thirteenth canon of the Council of Ancyra, A. D. 315, reads thus: "'Tis not allowed to village bishops to ordain presbyters and deacons; nor is it allowed even to city presbyters to do this in another diocese without the license of a bishop."

This canon not only maintains the office of a bishop, but the right of a presbyter to ordain. Methodism can quietly sit down under its protection, feeling that its claims, however viewed, are in accordance with the precedents of the history of the church.

Jerome, who wrote 400, A. D., speaks as follows on the point at issue: "In both Epistles, (Timothy and Titus,) whether bishops or presbyters, (although among the ancients the same who were bishops were also presbyters,) they were commanded to be chosen into the clergy, who had but one wife." Again: "I hear that one was so impudent as to rank deacons before presbyters, that is, bishops. Now the apostle plainly declares the same to be presbyters who also are bishops." And again, quoting from Caius, he says: "In the Sec of Alexandria, from St. Mark, the evangelist, to Heraclas and Dionysius, *bishops*, the presbyters always elected one from among themselves, and raising him to a higher rank, they called him bishop; much as an army chooses an emperor, or as deacons elect one from among themselves, and call him

Archdeacon. Indeed, what can a bishop do, that a presbyter may not do, except ordination?" To this he adds: "Wherever the bishop be, whether at Rome, or Eugubium, or Constantinople, or Rhegium, or Alexandria, or Tanais, he is of the same degree, and of the same priesthood; for all are successors of the apostles. Presbyter is a title of age, bishop of office. Wherefore (in the Epistles) to Timothy and Titus, is mention made of the ordination of bishops and deacons, but not of presbyters? Because in the bishop the presbyter is contained. The same, therefore, is a presbyter, who also is a bishop; for before, by the instigation of the devil, parties were formed in religion, and it was said by the people, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, the churches were governed by the council of presbyters. But after some began to consider those which he had baptized to be his own, not Christ's, it was decreed throughout the whole world, that one be elected, who should be put over the rest of the presbyters, to whom the care of all the church should pertain; and thus the seeds of schism were taken away. If any one esteems it not of Scripture, but to be our opinion, that bishops and presbyters are one, this being a title of age, that of office, he is referred to the language of the apostle to the Philippians."

Does not Jerome state that bishop is a title of office? And does he not state that the presbyters of Alexandria elected their bishops? Do not our ministers, in the General Conference, elect our bishops? And do we not agree with Jerome in this, that bishop is a title of office?

Thus we prove by the testimony of the early fathers that our organization is in accordance with the Scriptures, so far as our principal officers are concerned.

Having given the Scriptural view of church officers, also the sense of the fathers on the same subject, we shall now proceed to show that modern authors fully and clearly confirm our position.

Wickliff, called the morning star of the reformation, says: "I boldly assert one thing, viz., that in the primitive church, or in the time of St. Paul, two orders of the clergy were sufficient, that is, a priest and a deacon. In like manner I affirm, that in the time of Paul the presbyter and the bishop were names of the same office. This appears from the third chapter of the first epistle to Timothy, and in the first chapter of the

epistle to Titus. And the same is testified by that profound theologian Jerome." (See Wickliff's Trialogus, as quoted by Vaughan in his Life of Wickliff, vol. 2, p. 275; Lon. ed. 1831.)

Critically speaking, the office of the bishop included the order of the presbyter in the days of the apostles. This we have placed beyond the possibility of contradiction.

Dr. Robertson says: "I do not think it absurd that a priest should consecrate a bishop, if a bishop cannot be had.—(*Powell on Apostolic Succession*, p. 150.)

Wesley's conduct, in setting Coke apart for America, could be defended by this sentiment, but we have claimed for him higher ground, that he was a Scriptural bishop.

Bishop of London: "I think the bishops were first, and yet I think it is not of importance, whether the priest then made the bishop, or the bishop the priest; considering after the sentence of Jerome, that in the beginning of the church there was no (or if there were, very small) difference between a bishop and a priest, especially touching the signification." *Ibid*, p. 150. The difference, as we have already shown, was this: the ordination of a man made him an elder, and his appointment to officiate made him a bishop.

Dr. Redmayne: "They all be of like beginning, and at the beginning were both one, as St. Hierome and other old authors show by the Scriptures, wherefore one made another indifferently." *Ibid*, p. 150. This needs no comment.

Johnson, the translator of the canons of the *universal church*, says: "That opinion, that the order of priests and bishops was the same, prevailed in the church at Rome for four or five ages before the reformation." *Ibid*, p. 174.

Such are the sentiments of our best modern authors.

We shall now, however, allow Wesley to speak for himself:

"BRISTOL, September 10, 1784.

"By a very uncommon train of providences, many of the provinces of North America are totally disjointed from their mother country, and erected into independent States. The English government has no authority over them, either civil or ecclesiastical, any more than over the States of Holland. A civil authority is exercised over them, partly by the Congress, partly by the Provincial Assemblies. But no one either exercises or claims any ecclesiastical authority at all. In this

peculiar situation, some thousands of the inhabitants of these States desire my advice; and in compliance with their desire I have drawn up a little sketch.

“Lord King’s account of the primitive Church convinced me, many years ago, that bishops and presbyters are the same order, and consequently have the same right to ordain. For many years I have been importuned, from time to time, to exercise this right, by ordaining part of our travelling preachers, but I have still refused, not only for peace’ sake, but because I was determined, as little as possible, to violate the established order of the national church to which I belonged.

“But the case is widely different between England and North America. Here there are bishops who have a legal jurisdiction. In America there are none, neither any parish ministers. So that, for some hundred miles together, there is none either to baptize or to administer the Lord’s Supper. Here, therefore, my scruples are at an end; and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order, and invade no man’s right, by appointing and sending laborers into the harvest. I have accordingly appointed Dr. Coke and Mr. Francis Asbury to be joint superintendents over our brethren in North America, and also Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey to act as elders among them, by baptizing and administering the Lord’s Supper.

“If any one will point out a more rational and scriptural way of feeding and guiding those poor sheep in the wilderness, I will gladly embrace it. At present I cannot see any better method than that I have taken. “JOHN WESLEY.”

Wesley, vindicating his authority to do what we have stated, observed, in answer to his brother: “I firmly believe that I am a scriptural bishop, as much so as any man in England, or in Europe; for the uninterrupted succession I know to be a fable, which no man ever did or can prove.”

Have we not proved from the Scriptures that he was a bishop? Have we not proved from the writings of the early fathers that he was a bishop? And have we not proved by the statements and admissions of modern writers that he was a bishop? Does it not therefore follow, that he acted scripturally in reference to the organization of the Methodist Church in this country?

The following declaration, which was signed by Cromwell, vicar-general, Cranmer, and Holgate, archbishops, confirms, if additional proof be needed from such quarters, the position for which we so strenuously contend: "The truth is, there is no mention made of any degrees or distinctions in orders, but only of deacons or ministers, or of priests or bishops." It is worthy of remark here, that Archbishop Usher's plan for comprehending the Presbyterians and Episcopalians in the time of Charles I., was also founded on the principle of bishops and presbyters being one order.

Let it be remembered, however, that a man might have been an elder or a priest in apostolic times, without being a bishop; but let it also be remembered, that he, who was then a bishop, was such by virtue of office, and not by virtue of a distinct order.

On this principle Wesley acted, persuaded he was a scriptural bishop. It now remains for us to say, that the considerations and facts presented are sufficient, fully sufficient to convince the reflecting mind, that Wesley acted in accordance with the constitution of the Church, the Scriptures, when he organized, through Coke and Asbury, American Methodism.

If it should be asked, How came Wesley to lay hands on Coke, seeing he was as much a scriptural bishop as himself? Our answer is, were not hands laid on Paul and Barnabas, in order to set them apart for a particular work? In this Wesley saw a scriptural precedent in setting Coke apart for a special work in America.

This precedent is thus given in the Acts of the Apostles, chapter xiii.: "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers, as Barnabas, and Simeon, and Lucius, and Manaen, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."

In the light of this passage we not only see the act of Wesley, in setting apart Coke, fully approved, but the very manner of it. And so we close the argument on the first point in the question, that the Methodist Episcopal Church is scripturally organized.

The remaining point in the question to be established is,

that the Methodist Episcopal Church is republican in her organization. Webster defines the word Republic thus: "A Commonwealth; a state in which the exercise of the sovereign power is lodged in representatives elected by the people. In modern usage it differs from a democracy or democratic state, in which the people exercise the powers of sovereignty in person." From this we see that neither the government of the United States, nor that of the Methodist Episcopal Church can be looked on as being democratic; that both are republican in their character, sovereign power being lodged in their representatives.

How often do we use words without seeming to be aware of their proper meaning and application. For instance, Mr. A. says, "I am a democrat." This is easily said; but what is the meaning of the word democrat? Webster responds, "One who favors the extension of the right of suffrage to all classes." So far as the approval of this is concerned, we are all "Know Nothings" by profession, principle, and act. A democrat of this class would be a very novel sight. In a word, we might as well undertake to find some of the timbers of Noah's Ark, or the needle with which Eve made her first fashionable dresses, as to find such a democrat.

The character of democracy and that of republicanism being stated, we are now ready to show that the principle of the latter is embodied in the polity and policy of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Do we not in civil affairs lodge sovereign power in our representatives? That is, after being elected, they exercise the right of making laws, and of governing. Do not Methodists elect all their officers? The discipline respecting this fact is: "No person shall be licensed to preach without the recommendation of the society of which he is a member, or of a leaders' meeting." Page 34, ed. 1846. Every bishop of our church was so elected to the ministry. Without this not one of them could have been made a bishop. Let it be remembered too, that our women, and those under twenty-one, are allowed to vote in our societies. Here we have republicanism, granting liberties, which are not granted in State affairs. In State affairs the women are not permitted to vote, nor are young men under a certain age. The republicanism of the Methodist Episcopal Church, all must see from these con-

siderations, breathes a freer air than the republicanism of the States.

The candidate, after being elected as above stated, appears before the Quarterly Conference for license to preach. This leads us to inquire into the character and power of the Quarterly Conference. The language of our Discipline is: "Of whom shall the Quarterly Conferences be composed? Answer. Of all travelling and local preachers, exhorters, stewards, and class-leaders of the circuits and stations, also Sunday-school superintendents." Here again we have the members of the Church acting; that is granting license to preach, recommending suitable persons to the Annual Conferences for deacons' or elders' orders in the local connection, admitting on trial in the travelling connection, hearing complaints, and trying appeals. See Discipline, pp. 33, 34.

Are any of the members of the Commonwealth, after voting for mayor and aldermen, or for members of the legislative assembly, allowed to sit with them, exercising equal rights? No—no! Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church sit in our Quarterly Conferences, and exercise rights not granted to the presiding ministers, who, in cases of trial, can only pronounce their decisions—rights in common with all the local preachers, though elected, as previously stated, by the societies, they making a portion of them at the time of election. Now, what think ye of our republicanism in this particular? Does it not extend beyond the republicanism we have glanced at in the case of an election of mayor and aldermen, or of an election of members for the legislative assembly? Most assuredly. The extension is stated, yet we shall repeat it, that members of our Church can sit with officers elevated by their suffrage, exercising equal rights with them—a thing unknown to the republicanism of the people in civil affairs. Here you have the extension of our republicanism beyond that of the State—our enlarged liberty.

What are the members of our Annual Conferences but the representatives of our people? They stand elected by the members. It may be said that they try, censure, reprove, or expel, without consulting the lay members of the Church. Does not the legislature of each State act on a similar principle?

If our Annual Conferences elect the members of the Gene-

ral Conferences, do not our legislative assemblies, without consulting with their constituents, elect the Senators of the United States?

If the General Conference enacts laws apart from the direct voice of our members, does not Congress enact laws apart from the direct vote of the people?

If the General Conference elects the presiding officer, the bishop, does not the Senate of the United States elect the presiding officer, the speaker?

If a bishop, executing the wishes of those who elected him, appoints our ministers to certain fields of labor, does not the President of the United States, without asking the permission of the people, appoint many of the leading officers of the republic?

Have any of you, who are now listening to our argument on the republicanism of the Methodist Episcopal Church, ever voted for the President's Cabinet? Have any of you ever voted for our hosts of foreign ministers? Have you ever voted for a postmaster? In a word, are there not thousands of officers officiating in high places without your immediate suffrage?

Here we beg leave to ask, persuaded that the evidence adduced must fully satisfy the unbiased mind, have we not demonstrated that the government of our Church is founded on the principle of republicanism? Yea, more, that it grants privileges that are not granted by the republicanism of the people of the Commonwealth in civil affairs. These privileges being stated, we need not repeat them.

A republic, in Brandt's Dictionary of Science, Literature, and Art, is thus defined, New York ed., 1854: "A republic may be either an aristocracy or a democracy: the supreme power, in the former being consigned to the nobles or a few privileged individuals, as was formerly the case in Venice and Genoa; while, in the latter, it is placed in the hands of rulers chosen by and from the whole body of the people, or by their representatives assembled in a congress or national assembly."

This, however viewed, proves that the Methodist Episcopal Church is republican in her organization. Hear again the testimony: "A republic may be either an aristocracy or a democracy."

Respected hearers, the more you will reflect on the facts

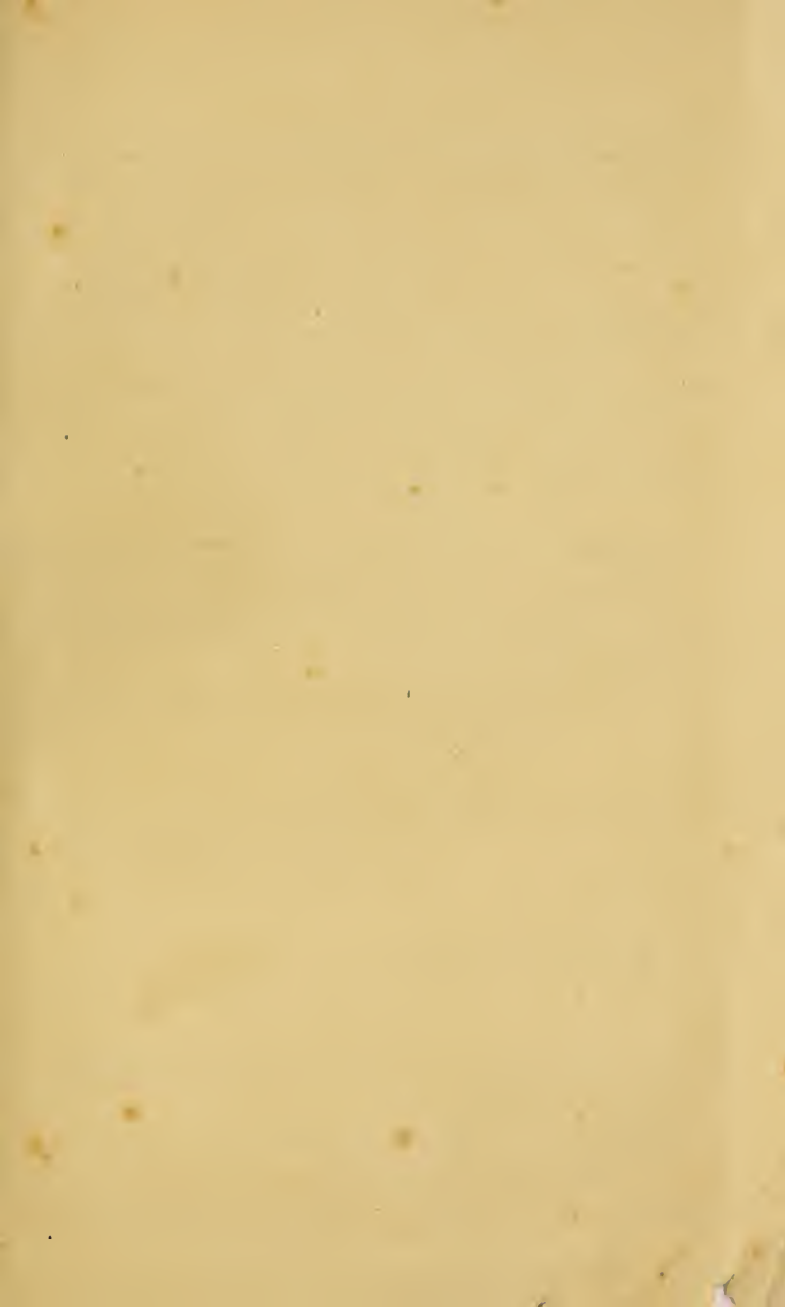
and illustrations presented, the more you will be convinced that the whole question stands undeniably sustained. If there is a doubter under the sound of our voice, he must be looked on as composed of doubting qualities.

Let us therefore ask, would it not seem like piling Ossa on Pelion, were we to attempt to add any thing to what precedes on the question under discussion? Most assuredly.

Yet the officers of our Church are represented as being "clerical despots—subverters of the rights of the members." Clerical despots! We, who stand in the front of God's army, contending with rain and snow, heat and cold, privations and trials; visiting the poor man in his cabin, the Indian in his wigwam—the salary of each being less than that of any other minister of a different denomination, "clerical despots!" The thought insults the common understanding of mankind.

We leave our homes, with an adieu to the scenes of childhood—to all we there love, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, lingering on our lips, that we may preach the story of the cross to God's poor; yet we are called "clerical despots." We plead "not guilty." Heaven would say "not guilty."

The Church of our choice may have defects and faults in her movements; but with all her imperfections we love her still; and when the future historian will recount her trials, the fields of her labors and mighty achievements—her startling zeal and efforts to save a world smitten with a curse, she will stand out before the eyes of all like some bright star on the brow of evening.



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